

Message Text

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22-12

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 PRS-01 CIAE-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MR. TOMPKINS

----- 014138

R 242341Z NOV 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL
CINCEUR FOR POLAD

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPT
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
NOVEMBER 24, 1975:

Q. THE QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED SEVERAL TIMES ABOUT
WHETHER OR NOT THE ARAB BOYCOTT OFFICE IS RETALIATING
AGAINST SHIPS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL
CARRYING ISRAELI CARGO. HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO RESEARCH
THIS ISSUE IN THE INTERVENING TEN DAYS SINCE IT WAS FIRST
RAISED?

A. I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING ON IT SINCE THOSE FIRST PRESS
REPORTS, NOR HAVE I SEEN ANY SUBSEQUENT REPORTS REPEATING
THOSE ALLEGATIONS.

Q. ON FRIDAY FBPS HAD A STATEMENT FROM THE BOYCOTT
OFFICE ON THAT SUBJECT, SAYING THAT THE GREEK FREIGHTER
OLYMPUS WAS INDEED BOYCOTTED, PLACED ON THE BOYCOTT LIST.
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A. LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN FIND OUT ABOUT IT. I WASN'T
AWARE OF THAT PARTICULAR REPORT.

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COMPLAINT BY
SENATOR CASE REGARDING THE EGYPTIANS FLYING OR BEING IN
IRANIAN PLANES SOLD TO IRAN BY THE UNITED STATES?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT WAS A COMPLAINT BY THE
SENATOR. I KNOW HE DID ASK THE SECRETARY FOR
INFORMATION ABOUT THESE REPORTS. AND AS YOU WILL RECALL,
I WAS ASKED ABOUT IT ALSO. ON SATURDAY, IN RESPONSE
TO THE SENATOR'S REQUEST, AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY, ON
BEHALF OF THE SECRETARY, INFORMED THE SENATOR THAT WE

UNDERSTAND THAT DURING A HIGH-LEVEL VISIT TO IRAN, SOME SENIOR EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE OFFICERS WERE GIVEN DEMONSTRATION FLIGHTS IN IRANIAN F-4S. HOWEVER, NO EGYPTIAN PILOTS ARE RECEIVING TRAINING IN IRANIAN F-4S OR ANY OTHER U.S. SUPPLIED AIRCRAFT, FOR THAT MATTER. AND I MIGHT ADD THAT IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR ONE COUNTRY TO SHOW ANOTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRY SOME OF ITS AIRCRAFT INVENTORY.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US HOW MANY EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE OFFICERS HAD RIDES IN THESE PLANES AND WHEN THIS TOOK PLACE?

A. I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY OR WHEN IT TOOK PLACE. I KNOW IT WAS RECENT. BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY HIGH-LEVEL OFFICERS WERE INVOLVED IN THIS VISIT TO IRAN. LET ME SEE IF WE HAVE ANYTHING MORE ON IT THAN WHAT I WAS PROVIDED TODAY.

Q. WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE DEMONSTRATION FLIGHTS, JUST TO SHOW OFF THE SKILL OF THE IRAN PILOTS, OR THAT THEY HAVE GOT THESE PLANES, OR WHAT?

A. AS I SAID, IT IS NOT UNUSUAL, WHEN AVIATORS FROM ONE FRIENDLY COUNTRY VISIT ANOTHER, FOR THEM TO BE GIVEN RIDES OR DEMONSTRATION FLIGHTS OF AIRPLANES THEY HAVE IN THEIR INVENTORY.

Q. AND THAT IS WHAT THIS WAS FOR -- JUST A FRIENDLY UNCLASSIFIED

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GESTURE, TO SHOW THEIR AIR FORCE OFF TO THE EGYPTIANS.

A. I THINK IT WAS JUST WHAT WE SAID IT WAS.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON U.S. ARMS GOING TO THE PHALANGISTS IN LEBANON?

A. ON THIS REPORT OF U.S. ARMS IN LEBANON, I WANT TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR, AS WE HAVE ON REPEATED OCCASIONS

IN THE PAST, THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS NOT APPROVING ANY REQUESTS FOR PERMISSION TO EXPORT ARMS TO ANYBODY IN LEBANON -- TO ANY PRIVATE PERSONS OR GROUPS IN LEBANON.

SECONDLY, WE STRONGLY DISAPPROVE OF ANY ILLICIT SHIPMENT OF ARMS INTO LEBANON FROM ANY SOURCES AND TO ANY GROUPS.

THE THIRD POINT I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE IS WE STRONGLY SUPPORT EFFORTS OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN THE CEASE-FIRE IN THE INTERNAL STRIFE THAT IS BESETTING THAT COUNTRY.

Q. WELL, DO YOU THINK THIS REPORT IS UNTRUE, THAT SOME ARMS ARE GOING IN, AND THAT THERE WAS PAYMENT, AND THAT IT WAS MADE FROM MONACO, AND A GUY NAMED TEXAS, ETC.?

A. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT CONTENDING GROUPS IN LEBANON ARE RECEIVING, OR ARE BEING SUPPLIED ARMS BY ILLICIT MEANS. WE DO NOT CONDONE THIS ILLICIT SHIPMENT, AS I HAVE JUST INDICATED. IN FACT WE STRONGLY DISAPPROVE OF IT.

A. ALL RIGHT. IS THE GOVERNMENT MAKING AN INVESTIGATION AS TO WHETHER THIS IS TRUE AND IF SO TO TRY TO STOP IT?

A. OBVIOUSLY WHEN WE HAVE REPORTS LIKE THIS, WE DO INVESTIGATE THEM. BUT I THINK REALISTICALLY WE ALSO HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS VERY DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, FOR US TO CONTROL ILLICIT SHIPMENTS ORIGINATING OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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REPORTS OF ARMS OF MANY ORIGINS REACHING THE VARIOUS GROUPS IN LEBANON, NOT ONLY U.S., BUT EUROPEAN AS WELL AS SOVIET.

Q. CAN YOU COMMENT ON A UPI REPORT EARLY THIS MORNING THAT THERE IS A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO RABIN PROMISING THAT SHOULD ANY NEGOTIATION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA BE DEADLOCKED, THERE WOULD BE NO PRESSURE TO DO MORE THAN SORT OF COSMETIC BORDER RECTIFICATIONS, TO QUOTE THE REPORT?

A. I THINK ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA, I WOULD RECALL THAT WE HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT SOME WAY HAS TO BE FOUND TO KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. YOU

WILL REMEMBER THAT THE SECRETARY, WHEN HE WAS UP BEFORE THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 7 -- THAT COMES TO MIND, BUT THERE ARE OTHER INSTANCES AS WELL -- SAID, WE DO NOT CONSIDER THE SINAI AGREEMENT AS PERMITTING ANY STAGNATION IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION. BUT TO THE CONTRARY, THE PURPOSE OF THE SINAI AGREEMENT WAS TO GIVE IMPETUS TO NEGOTIATION.

SO WE ARE READY TO MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO GET NEGOTIATIONS STARTED BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL IF THE PARTIES SO DESIRE. AND THAT REMAINS OUR POSITION.

Q. YOU DIDN'T ADDRESS THE QUESTION. WAS THERE A FORD LETTER TO RABIN, TO START WITH; AND SECONDLY, IF THERE WAS ONE, DID ITS CONTENTS INCLUDE A PROMISE THAT THE

UNITED STATES WOULD NOT PRESSURE ISRAEL FOR MORE THAN COSMETIC CHANGES?

A. I THINK FROM WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID IT IS VERY CLEAR WHAT OUR POSITION IS, WHICH CONFLICTS WITH THE SPECULATIVE PRESS REPORTS OUT OF TEL AVIV.

Q. ARE YOU DENYING THOSE REPORTS THEN?

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A. I THINK THAT OUR WHOLE POSITION ON THE QUESTION OF COMMITMENTS AND UNDERTAKINGS HAS BEEN SAID PUBLICLY BY THE SECRETARY AND OTHER PEOPLE ON THE HILL TO THE CONGRESS.

Q. WAS THERE A LETTER FROM FORD TO RABIN? LET'S START WITH THAT.

A. I AM SURE THAT THERE ARE LETTERS BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND PRIME MINISTER RABIN. BUT WHAT THIS REPORT IS TALKING ABOUT IS CONTRARY AND CONFLICTS WITH WHAT WE HAVE SAID AND WHAT I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO RESTATE THIS AFTERNOON.

Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT TODAY DENIED REPORTS THAT FORD SENT A LETTER TO RABIN -- IS THAT RIGHT -- GIVING ASSURANCES OF NO PRESSURE?

A. I THINK THE PRESS REPORT SAID, OR SUGGESTED, THAT WE WERE FAVORING A POSITION WHICH WAS SOMEHOW IN OPPOSITION OR NOT CONSISTENT WITH OUR PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ABOUT MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM FOR PEACE, AND THE FACT IS THAT THE SINAI AGREEMENT WAS NOT INTENDED TO SLOW DOWN THE PROCESS, BUT RATHER TO KEEP IT GOING.

Q. BUT IS IT INCONSISTENT TO SAY THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WE ARE TRYING VERY HARD TO GET GOING, DEADLOCK, THAT MR. FORD ASSURED MR. RABIN THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO DO X, Y OR Z?

A. IT IS PRETTY HARD TO SPECULATE OR TO COMMENT ON STORIES THAT ARE SPECULATING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS THAT HAVE NOT EVEN BEGUN.

Q. NO -- BUT THEY ARE SAYING THERE IS A LETTER, WHICH SPECULATES ON WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN. ARE YOU DENYING THAT THERE IS A LETTER TO THAT EFFECT?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION REALLY TO COMMENT SPECIFICALLY ON CORRESPONDENCE OR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE -- BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER HEADS OF GOVERN-

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MENT, OBVIOUSLY. BUT WHAT I AM SAYING AND WHAT I HAVE
RESTATED IS WHAT OUR POLICY IS ON ISRAELI-ARAB
NEGOTIATIONS AND SPECIFICALLY THE POSSIBILITY OF ISRWELI
NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA. WE CONTINUE TO BE COMMITTED
TO THAT PROCESS AND WE ARE WORKING IN THAT DIRECTION.

Q. I'M NOT CLEAR, ABOUT WAS THERE A LETTER, SAY, IN THE
LAST THREE WEEKS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD SENT TO THE
PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL THAT REFERRED TO SYRIA IN ANY
WAY?

A- YOU WILL HAVE TO DIRECT THAT KIND OF QUESTION TO THE
WHITE HOUSE.

Q. ARE YOU SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER THERE IS SUCH
A LETTER OR YOU ARE JUST NOT GOING TO ANSWER BECAUSE IT
IS NOT IN THE PROTOCOL SITUATION?

A. BOTH.

INGERSOLL

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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TEL AVIV
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